



# DRAFT: JUNCTION SQUARE MASTER PLAN

Milton, Wisconsin

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Draft: July 24th, 2015

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# Part I: Background and Introduction

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## THE MAKING OF MILTON

The City of Milton is unique amongst small cities for its two, distinct downtown business districts. This unique formation is a byproduct of the 1967 merger between the communities of Old Milton and Milton Junction. Prior to the merger, these two communities each had their own economies, religious and civic institutions, utilities, and school systems. Yet, clear synergies existed and resulted in early collaborations. As encroaching growth from a booming Janesville threatened to engulf both communities, discussions of merger became more serious and impassioned. Leadership from both communities concluded that a united Milton could do more to create a thriving environment for business, industry, and residents, than two separate communities fighting to survive. The village boards moved quickly to pass the referendum in 1967, and in 1969 Milton was officially chartered the City of Milton. However, the legacy of “two Milton’s” survives still today in the memories of Milton’s longtime residents.

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

The City of Milton recognizes today, as it did in 1967, that continued success demands all facets of the community thrive together, including both downtowns. While distinct, these downtown share synergies much like the communities they served. Goodrich Square is the oldest settled part of the community and served as the downtown for Old Milton. Today, it is a family-oriented service center of Milton with uses including hair salons, a dog groomer, bank, splash pad, and East Elementary School. Junction Square, formerly Merchant Row, served Milton Junction. With several food and drink destinations intermixed with specialty shops, the Junction is a popular entertainment destination for many residents.

In 2010, the City prepared a downtown plan for Goodrich Square in order to define and enhance the downtown’s character, plan for the now complete Highway 26 Bypass, and leverage TIF funding. The success of the Goodrich plan spurred the interest of the City, Chamber (MAACT), and downtown businesses (DDAC) in analyzing Junction Square. To this end, this Junction Square Master Plan (The Plan) sets a vision for the downtown, identifies opportunities for growth, and details strategies for realizing goals.

## KEY REASONS FOR INITIATING THE JUNCTION SQUARE PLAN

**Building on Previous Plans and Strategies** - The City of Milton is in the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan. With community support for a Junction Square Plan, the City took advantage of economies of scale and pursued both plans simultaneously. This process will build upon the 2010 Comprehensive Plan and Goodrich Square Plan development efforts. Strategies for Junction Square in the 2010 Comprehensive Plan include spurring economic development in the downtown through incentives, actively support the return of passenger rail with a stop mapped in Junction Square, develop an urban park with rail themed amenities, and others. The Junction Square Plan will incorporate these adopted strategies, and provide Junction-specific redevelopment opportunities and analysis.

## **Vision Development and Collaboration**

The Goodrich Square Plan was highly impactful and well received in large part because it provided a defined vision and achievable, near-term strategies accompanied by cost projections. Similarly, the Junction Square Plan will provide key strategies that further the vision for the area as defined by business owners and residents. To ensure that both downtowns work seamlessly together and limit direct competition, the Junction Square plan will define a vision and goals that complements Goodrich Square while differentiating the Junction's amenities and offerings.

### **Adjusting to Highway 26 By-Pass –**

At the creation of the Goodrich Square Plan, the WIS 26 Bypass that connects communities and major highways in Rock, Jefferson, and Dodge counties between the cities of Janesville and Waupun was being planned. Now in place, the highway reduced the amount of traffic along Janesville Street but has not had as detrimental an impact on the local businesses as originally anticipated. This is due in large part to the unique nature of area business that have made them popular destinations among locals and visitors. However, the reduced visibility is still a challenge that needs to be addressed. Therefore, one key reason for completing the Junction Square Plan is to adjust to the by-pass and identify ways to mitigate the inherent challenges it brings while maximizing by-pass related opportunities.

## **JUNCTION SQUARE'S HISTORY**

Junction Square's railroad history has long made it a place for commerce and community. Once a popular stop for passenger rail, today only industrial trains rumble along the tracks. Nevertheless, rail has, and continues to leave a mark on the community. The former Depot station (now Klig's Union Depot), Railroad Park, and this downtown's own name, Junction Square, celebrate this culture. This history has earned part of Junction Square a nomination in the National Register of Historic Places. The concentrated, well defined commercial corridor has several prominent buildings with unique architecture that add to the attractiveness of the established neighborhood they inhabits. When the community of Milton merged with Milton Junction, Junction maintained its character as a community destination, quickly becoming a dining and shopping district. Building off this history and longstanding culture will be critical to ensuring downtown Junction Square succeeds well into the future.

## **PLANNING PROCESS**

The City, Chamber, and other downtown organizations and stakeholders recognized that in order to realize continued growth of Junction Square, a forward-looking vision and plan was needed. This group launched the process of creating the Plan in early 2015 by engaged Vandewalle & Associates to assist in its development. The opportunities, strategies, and recommendations identified in this plan were developed through a process that included the following steps:

- **Data Collection and Analysis** – This included collecting and analyzing key information on demographics and economics of the Junction Square market area and doing a parcel-by-parcel evaluation of the physical conditions of the District (both summarized in the following sections).
- **Stakeholder Interviews and Business Roundtable** – In April 14<sup>th</sup>, representatives from Vandewalle & Associates spent the day in Milton to kick-off the project. This full-day included:
  - A meeting with City Staff and community leaders,
  - A walking and driving tour of the City and Junction Square with staff,
  - Convening of a Downtown Business Roundtable attended by several business and property owners in the District to gain insights into the business climate and any challenges, and
  - Other focus group meetings including Education & Recreation, Workforce Development, Historic & Tourism, Economic Development, and a meeting with representatives from the City Council and the Planning Commission.
- **Community Charrette** – A Charrette is a highly-interactive visioning and feedback session focused on generating public input about all aspects of the downtown in order to best inform the plan’s development. The City hosted a Community Charrette that jointly focused on Junction Square and the Comprehensive Plan. The Charrette consisted of three stations: a Comprehensive Plan station, a Junction Square station, and a station focused on Public and Open space in Junction Square. The community was engaged around specific issues pertaining to each topic or area of opportunity. A summary of the results of the Charrette is provided in Appendix I of this document.
- **Junction Square Plan Open House (To be Scheduled)** – The City hosted an Open House to present the vision for Junction Square, the strategies, and recommendations of the plan. Over [REDACTED] people attended the Open House where they were given the opportunity to evaluate the concept plans and recommendations for Junction Square. A questionnaire was used to give attendees the opportunity to provide their input on what recommendations and improvements they believe are most important. A summary of the results of this event are provided in Appendix II.

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## Part II: Community and Regional Setting

### OVERVIEW OF MARKET INDICATORS

#### Areas of Analysis and Trade Area Definition

The first step in analyzing Junction Square’s business climate was defining the trade area. Trade areas are geographical zones that encapsulate the clientele who are served by a particular business, service, or in this case, business district. Identifying this zone helps to best inform the planning process by clearly identifying the target demographic whose market behavior and preferences most impact Junction Square businesses.

Figure 1 shows the trade area used to generate the analysis and findings used in this plan. The school district boundary formed the base of this area which was further manipulated to account for drive times, the “community affinity” of residents (i.e., whether they identify with a particular district as part of their community), and other factors. This area is careful to exclude Janesville as the commercial activity would be skewed by the prevalence of big box stores and other retailers in that market. The Town of Newville was added to capture the spending activity of campers who are key clientele for many businesses throughout the City. In this way, the trade area differs from that used in the Goodrich Square Plan. Table 1 shows the population located within this trade area at 1, 3, and 5 mile radii from the center of the City. As this table shows, roughly 19,500 people live within Junction Square’s trade area and could be serviced by Junction businesses.

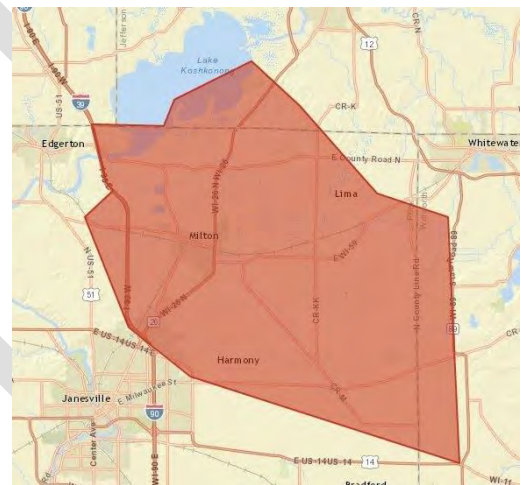


FIGURE 1: MILTON TRADE AREA

TABLE 1: POPULATION OF COMPARISON AREAS, 2015

|                                  | 2015 Total Population |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Milton Market Area with Newville | 19,467                |
| Milton Radii (1 mile)            | 4,406                 |
| Milton Radii (3 miles)           | 8,520                 |
| Milton Radii (5 miles)           | 20,220                |
| Rock County                      | 160,208               |
| Wisconsin                        | 5,742,139             |

## **Income Comparison**

The following chart graphs household incomes of residents within varying radii. The radii assess incomes of individuals and households using the center of Milton as a starting point. Findings show that while incomes do increase as you include more of Milton's population, even Milton's lower incomes are still consistent with or exceed the county and state values.

**TABLE 2: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME, 2015**

|                                  | 2015 Per Capita Income | 2015 Median Household Income | 2015 Average Household Income |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Milton Market Area with Newville | \$29,559               | \$67,344                     | \$76,835                      |
| Milton Radii (3 miles)           | \$27,443               | \$60,101                     | \$70,540                      |
| Milton Radii (5 miles)           | \$29,738               | \$66,093                     | \$76,337                      |
| Rock County                      | \$24,403               | \$48,219                     | \$61,353                      |
| Wisconsin                        | \$27,779               | \$52,390                     | \$68,135                      |

Source: ESRI Business Analyst, 2015

## **Educational Attainment Comparison**

The adult population of the City of Milton reports higher rates of educational attainment than others in Rock County. Many (91.8%) have graduated high school compared to 87.7% having done the same in the County. While few residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, this number also exceeds the county average with 24% of residents having higher degrees versus 19% countywide. This high rate of education may be due to Milton's close proximity to UW-Madison and UW-Whitewater, and Milton's growing reputation as a bedroom community for professionals working in Janesville and Madison.

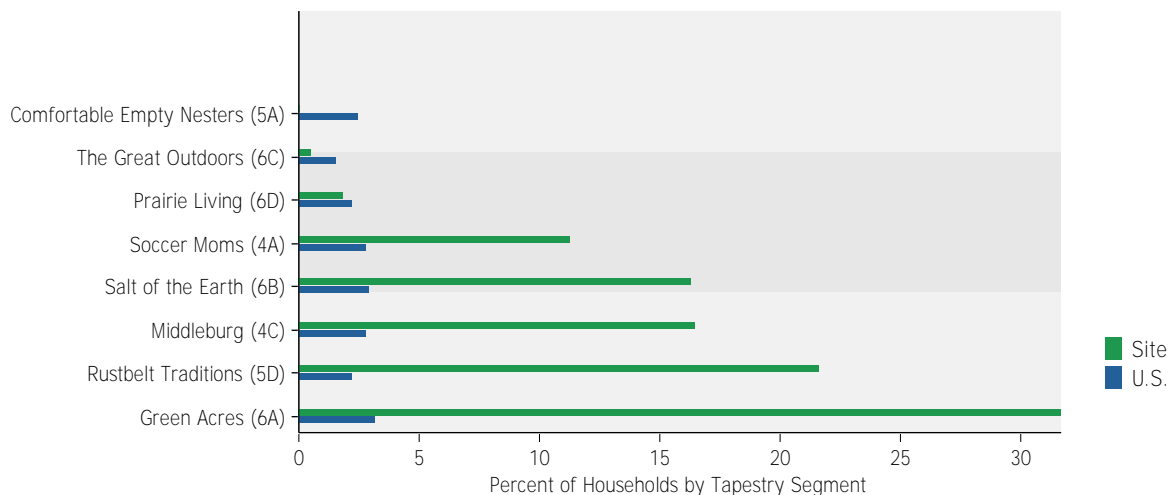
## **Tapestry Profile**

Tapestry is a household "segmentation" system that uses a variety of demographic and consumer behavior information to divide every household in the U.S. into one of 67 unique segments. Businesses use this market segmentation to better understand their market, target their clientele, and identify underserved markets. The segments offer a more illustrative analysis of the data and offers a fuller picture about the local market area. This analysis is valuable to the Junction Square planning process because it provides Junction businesses with more accurately tailor their store hours, service offerings, events, marketing, and merchandise to attract their target market. Tapestry is a system created by ESRI, a company that provides software, data, and other tools to analyze spatial information.

The chart below highlights the eight Tapestry market segments most common within the area encompassed by the Junction Square trade area (the approximate boundaries of the Milton School District plus Newville). These top five segments represent 97% of the population of the area. The characteristics of these segments are described below:

**FIGURE 2: TAPESTRY PROFILE OF THE TRADE AREA**

Top Ten Tapestry Segments Site vs. U.S.



Source: ESRI Business Analyst, 2015

### Characteristics and Consumer Spending Patterns of the Top Five Segments:

#### 1. Green Acres

- Home Owners
- Active in the community
- Own late model SUVs, Trucks, and/or ATVs
- Favor DIY projects and gardening
- Typically Frugal
- Enjoy fishing and hunting
- A “a little bit country” in their tastes and self-identity

#### 2. Rustbelt Traditions

- Own two or more vehicles
- Budget-conscious
- Favor American made products
- Have more than one TV
- Frequent family restaurants
- Utilize convenience stores

### **3. Middleburg**

- Thrifty but carry some debt
- Utilize the latest technology
- Own trucks and SUVs, and occasionally convertibles or motorcycles
- Frequent family restaurants
- Visit theme parks
- Rent movies
- Spending priorities focus on family
- Sports include hunting, bowling, and baseball

### **4. Salt of the Earth**

- Avid gardeners
- Enjoy camping, fishing, or boating
- Expert with DIY projects
- Cost-conscious and brand loyal
- Truck and ATV ownership is high
- Purchase equipment to tackle big jobs
- Own a satellite dish

### **5. Soccer Moms**

- Own 2+ vehicles Buy children's clothes
- Carry a mortgage and auto loans
- Own 4+ TVs
- Purchases are family-oriented including toys and children's apparel
- Activities include bicycling, jogging, golfing
- Visit theme parks or zoos
- Home maintenance is frequently contracted

## **Retail Gap Analysis**

A challenge for small communities is providing residents with a robust variety of goods or services. To best understand what retail offerings are currently provided or undersupplied, retail sector gap or "leakage" analysis was analyzed. This analysis compares existing levels of retail sales within a defined trade area to the potential retail sales based on the demographic characteristics and the number of households in the area. If retail sales (supply) exceed potential sales (demand), it is generally assumed that the market for that sector is saturated and there is no room for additional stores. If retail demand exceeds supply, it indicates that the trade area is experiencing retail "leakage". This means that consumers in the trade area may be leaving the area to purchase these goods at stores located in other communities. This is a "leakage" of revenue for Milton, and Milton area businesses.

Within Junction Square’s trade area, there is leakage in eight of the 13 categories assessed. The unmet retail demand could be addressed by small, community serving shops and restaurants. Table 3 highlights several key findings from this report.

It is important to note that while oversupplied categories exceed the demand locally, they may be supported by communities outside the trade area and create a destination that benefits the City as a whole. For example, the trade area has six Specialty Food stores with over \$9 million in sales, only \$863,717 of which is generated by consumers located within the trade area. These stores are attracting over \$8 million in sales from people traveling into the area. Another important note is that undersupply does not suggest a business filling that role will be successful. The retail gap analysis is simply a tool to offer a snapshot of the current state of the market and to suggest potential areas for further research.

**TABLE 3: RETAIL GAP ANALYSIS**

|   | <b>Demand (Retail Potential)</b> | <b>Supply (Retail Sales)</b> | <b>Retail Gap (Leakage or <b>Oversupply</b>)</b> |
|---|----------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Grocery Stores                            | \$32,048,397                     | \$11,953,113                 | \$20,095,284                                     |
| Health & Personal Care Stores             | \$19,685,142                     | \$7,225,215                  | \$12,459,927                                     |
| Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores    | \$11,674,150                     | \$1,348,936                  | \$10,325,214                                     |
| Automobile Dealers                        | \$41,036,153                     | \$32,176,529                 | \$8,859,624                                      |
| Electronics & Appliance                   | \$7,377,886                      | \$1,526,861                  | \$5,851,025                                      |
| Limited-Service Eating Places             | \$12,900,551                     | \$9,555,253                  | \$3,345,298                                      |
| Furniture & Home Furnishings Store        | \$4,656,209                      | \$664,853                    | \$3,991,356                                      |
| Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores     | \$2,819,266                      | \$336,630                    | \$2,482,636                                      |
| Book, Periodical, and Music Stores        | \$1,118,210                      | \$105,659                    | \$1,012,551                                      |
| Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores | \$1,493,836                      | \$3,355,050                  | <b>-\$1,861,214</b>                              |
| Sporting Goods/Hobby                      | \$3,805,968                      | \$8,141,540                  | <b>-\$4,335,572</b>                              |
| Specialty Food Stores                     | \$863,717                        | \$9,188,977                  | <b>-\$8,325,260</b>                              |
| General Merchandise                       | \$33,927,069                     | \$55,220,018                 | <b>-\$21,292,949</b>                             |
| Gasoline Stations                         | \$26,321,527                     | \$70,753,325                 | <b>-\$44,431,798</b>                             |

Source: ESRI Business Analyst, 2015

## KEY FINDINGS FROM DATA ANALYSIS

The key demographic and economic findings relate to and help drive the key issues and opportunities discussed in the following sections of this Plan. The following are key takeaways from these findings:

- The Junction Square “Trade Area” roughly mimics the Milton School District boundary and stretches north to Newville to capture the spending activity of campers who often frequent Milton.
- Residents are community oriented and have an affinity for the shops and restaurants located in their backyard. As Junction Square’s commercial activity is concentrated along Merchant Row and surrounded by single-family homes, it is more likely to be frequented by local residents who consider it a part of their neighborhood.
- Educational attainment rates and household incomes suggest that the City of Milton is a middle class/working class community with few outliers (either rich or low income). This is consistent with the findings in the 2010 Goodrich Square Plan which implies that the community is stable. Additionally, education rates and incomes for Milton exceed those of Rock County and are on par with national averages.
- There is retail sales leakage in eight of 13 industries assessed as people leave the community to shop for goods elsewhere. Leakage industries of note include Grocery Stores, Health & Personal Care stores, and Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores. There is an opportunity for this leakage to be captured in community serving stores located in Junction Square.
- There is a substantial surplus of Gas Stations, General Merchandise Stores, and Specialty Food stores as people from outside the identified trade area enter the community to consume these goods and services.
- Overall, Junction Square excels in providing many of the restaurants, drinking establishments that service the neighborhood and broader Milton community. This downtown is also a destination for several unique retail businesses that attract people from around the region to the City. Maximizing this asset particularly by capturing more of the camper market should be a focus moving forward.

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## Part III: Downtown's Opportunity Analysis

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### SITE SURVEY PHYSICAL ANALYSIS

#### **Boundaries & Land Use**

Downtown Junction Square is located in Milton's west end and is roughly bounded by Madison Avenue, Front Street, Vernal Avenue and First Street. As Map 1 shows, most of the businesses associated with this downtown are located along Merchant Row and Front St. However, several businesses front Vernal Ave., and even First Ln as this community-serving downtown transitions into a quiet residential neighborhood. The Fire Station on the north end of Madison Ave. and Liberty Park along the southern tracks are also included in the downtown, adding to the diversity of uses within the district. It is this proximity to the surrounding neighborhood and diversity of uses that truly makes Junction Square a community asset.

#### **Community Owned**

In addition to serving the community, Junction Square represents a community investment. Several of the property owners within the district, serve as the main tenant in the buildings. Several other live in the City or nearby. This ownership pattern, while mundane to many Milton residents, is remarkably unique and has positive repercussions for the success of the business district. Many cities lack this community buy-in and their downtowns struggle with poor property maintenance, high vacancy rates, and little community engagement. A number of public space assets add to the community's stake in Junction Square. As the bold red in Map 2 shows, there are several parks and recreational assets in this downtown that are open to the public.

#### **Historic Core**

The Merchant Row Historic District is pending designation as a historic place in the National Register of Historic Places. This district includes 212, 216, 218-220, 228-230 Merchant Row & 553, 537, 541 Vernal Ave. The National Register is the official list of historic places in the United States. Once listed, a site or district is recognized as a place with significant historical value worthy of preservation. To be considered, a site or district's age, architecture, and significance is assessed. If approved, the site is listed on the NR website and eligible for specific preservation incentives including Historic Tax credits or federal preservation grants for rehabilitation.

## **Assets & Issues**

Junction Square serves as an entertainment and recreation destination for the City with its many restaurants, bars, and unique shops complementing the offerings at family-oriented Goodrich Square. When the community and City leadership were engaged about this district, they identified the following assets and issues.

### **Key Downtown Assets**

**Solid Building Stock:** The high number of quality, historic buildings located in the district have earned a segment of the Junction a nomination in the National Register of Historic Places. This building stock has maintained its historic character for over a century in some cases and has been gently adapted to modern day uses.

**Multiple Eating and Drinking Establishments:** There are eight drinking and dining establishments offering visitor their choice of fine dining, casual dining, a pub atmosphere, or a more family-friendly environment. There is something for everyone at the Junction.

**Stable Adjoining Neighborhood:** With low vacancy rates and high property maintenance, the neighborhood surrounding Junction Square is perceived as a safe, attractive place to live. This stability buffers Junction Square and contributes to the positive business climate.

**Diverse Anchor Businesses:** Long-standing anchor tenants such as the Red Rooster and First Community Bank continue to make Junction Square a community destination.

**Public Open Spaces:** Railroad Park, Liberty Park, and Water Tower Park provide Junction Square visitors with open green space and recreational activities.

### **Key Downtown Issues**

1. Need to improve pedestrian connections: There are too few places for pedestrians to cross Madison Ave. to enter Junction Square and a blind corner where Vernal Ave. approaches Merchant Row.
2. Need to create visual and functional unifying elements: There are few visual elements that are consistent throughout the Junction and surrounding neighborhood. This lack of cohesion makes it difficult for visitors to clearly define the downtown.
3. Need to ensure land uses and aesthetic of Madison Ave, Front St, and Vernal St are reflective of Junction Square character: Several of the land uses in the broader Junction Square neighborhood are not in keeping with the downtown character of the district
4. Need to create a true gateway to Junction Square: Junction Square's narrow, nestled layout contributes to its charm, but greatly inhibits navigation as its entrance is lost to first-time visitors. During focus groups, several businesses shared anecdotes about the longtime resident who is discovering their store for the first time. Gateways at major junctions are necessary to attract residents, both new and old, to the business district.
5. Need to diversify drinking and dining establishments available to Junction Square visitors and residents: The number of drinking and dining establishments, while plentiful, lack culinary diversity. Food options in addition to what is currently offered would be well received.

6. Need to adjust traffic pattern to increase traffic flow to southern portion of downtown: Junction Square visitor often leave the downtown without visiting the restaurants along Merchant Row St.'s southern edge. This segment of the block experiences lower visibility and higher vacancies.
7. Need to activate open spaces and recreational assets: The districts vast open space amenities are largely unused and do little to connect park visitors to the downtown.
8. Need to define responsibilities between the City, various groups, and business owners: In order or efficiently and effectively support both downtowns, the City, Chamber of Commerce, and other downtown stakeholders need to identify roles and responsibilities.
9. Need to increase the number of people living downtown: Junction is surrounded by an attractive residential neighborhood. Increasing the number of consumers within walking distance would attract and prolong activity in the downtown.

## DOWNTOWN JUNCTION SQUARE VISION

“Historic Junction Square is making a name for itself as Milton’s community-serving, locally-owned, entertainment destination with one-of-a-kind specialty shops, fine art and craftsmen, dynamic casual dining, activities fun for all ages, and a unique experience for visitors and residents alike. Discover this unique crossroads of local flavor, commerce, and community at Junction Square.”

Downtown Junction Square is a thriving business district that has been serving the Milton community for centuries. Many of the business owners are longtime residents demonstrating a commitment to community that typifies small town America. This charm and communal culture attracts visitors from miles around and makes Junction Square a valuable City asset. The Junction Square vision seeks to maximize these existing strengths and set an ambitious tone for the future. By successfully implementing the strategies detailed in this plan and aligning partners around this vision, Junction businesses will reap the benefits.



# Vision

Historic Junction Square is making a new name for itself as Milton's locally-owned, community-serving entertainment destination with one-of-a-kind specialty shops, fine art and craftsmen, dynamic casual dining, recreational fun for all ages, and a unique experience for visitors and residents alike. Discover this unique crossroads of local flavor, commerce, and community at Junction Square.

## Assets & Issues



### ASSETS

1. Solid Building Stock
2. Multiple Eating and Drinking Establishments
3. Stable Adjoining Neighborhood
4. Diverse Anchor Businesses
5. Centered on Public Space

### ISSUES

1. Need to improve pedestrian connections
2. Need to create visual and functional unifying elements
3. Need to ensure land uses and aesthetic of Madison Ave, Front St, and Vernal St are reflective of Junction Square character
4. Need to create a true gateway to Junction Square
5. Need to diversify drinking and dining establishments available to Junction Square visitors and residents
6. Need to adjust traffic pattern to increase traffic flow to southern portion of downtown
7. Need to activate open spaces and recreational assets
8. Need to define responsibilities between the City, various groups, and business owners
9. Need to increase the number of people living downtown

## Strategic Initiatives

### 1. Program a unique Junction Square "experience" that will serve as an attractive destination for residents and visitors

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| a. Program experiences around products and services of existing businesses and assets  | e. Promote and attract artists and craftsmen to the Junction to create a vibrant arts destination for Milton-area artists and collectors |
| b. Formally and consistently program and market events   | f. Increase outdoor dining opportunities   |
| c. Market Junction Square amenities to campers and seasonal visitors   |  |
| d. Promote and attract niche / specialty food retailers and diverse dining options in order to establish Junction Square as Milton's arts and entertainment district |  |

### 2. Maximize open space, pedestrian access, and recreational assets

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| a. Create a pedestrian walk connection and respite through Junction Square   | e. Capitalize on Ice Age Trail proximity   |
| b. Create one or more additional recreational amenities in Railroad Park and /or Liberty Park to attract users to on an on-going basis | f. Activate Railroad Park with railroad themed elements                                  |
| c. Consider low impact adult sports in the downtown  | g. Realign ball park entrances/exits to encourage users to visit downtown establishments |
| d. Improve Liberty Park facilities and consider other adaptable uses   | h. Provide safe pedestrian access from Madison Avenue into Junction Square               |

### 3. Integrate a unifying Junction Square theme and define gateway entries

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| a. Create a unifying logo, color theme, and tag line that brands Junction Square   | d. Add vehicular access from Merchant Row to Front Street     |
| b. Integrate streetscaping and theme elements on Merchant Row, Vernal, Front St. and Madison Ave. to create a cohesive downtown core | e. Define surrounding neighborhood as a downtown neighborhood |
| c. Establish Junction Square gateways at Madison Avenue and Vernal Avenue by adding compelling visual elements and landscaping       | f. Enhance property maintenance standards                     |
|  | g. Create and maintain an available sites database            |

### 4. Reuse vacant buildings and properties in Junction Square

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| a. Work with owners of vacant buildings to identify and attract potential reuse or lease opportunities | e. Develop a museum or showroom that exhibits the work of artists and craftspeople |
| b. Consider additional housing development opportunities on infill sites                               | f. Create and maintain a database of available sites                               |
| c. Establish a regular farmer's market in vacant or open space   | g. Pursue grants for downtown redevelopment  |
| d. Assist prospective developers in accessing a financial resources                                    |  |

### 5. Establish an organizational structure and funding mechanism for managing Junction Square

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| a. Establish joint marketing efforts, common store hours, and events etc.                  | e. Focus on assisting entrepreneurs with starting new restaurant, entertainment, and arts/culture businesses in the downtown |
| b. Clearly define roles and responsibilities between City and other downtown organizations | f. Look for opportunities to jointly market businesses and events at both downtowns  |
| c. Consider hiring an events coordinator to manage events in both downtowns                |  |
| d. Identify a dedicated funding source   |  |





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## Part IV: Strategic Initiatives

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The five strategic initiatives summarized in the Opportunity Analysis chart and detailed below represent a plan of action that aims to address prevailing challenges in Junction Square and maximize its many assets and successes. These initiatives were informed by the planning process which included public feedback and participation of key stakeholders, particularly Junction Square businesses. **The strategies are listed in order of priority as determined by the Plan Commission, as were the specific action items.** These impactful strategies are not meant to be an exhaustive list of Junction Square initiatives, rather they recommend a strategic starting place for catalyzing future success in the district. To that end, the strategies, and the action items that support them, are designed to be near-term, high-impact, and achievable. In light of the finite City resources, it is anticipated that pursuit of these actions will be phased and additional partners aligned to support implementation.

### STRATEGIC INITIATIVE 1: PROGRAM A UNIQUE JUNCTION SQUARE “EXPERIENCE” THAT WILL SERVE AS AN ATTRACTIVE DESTINATION FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

Junction Square is a vibrant community-oriented shopping destination. However, with such a unique concentration of specialty shops and businesses, there is an opportunity for the Junction serve as something more. This strategy aims to position the Junction as a specialty entertainment district that invites visitors to get out their cars and stay a while. In contrast to the uniform, commercialized shopping centers with full-service big box stores commonplace in larger cities, Junction Square offers visitors a full “experience” unreplicated in the region.

#### **Program experiences around products and services of existing businesses and assets**

Junction square visitors can find drinking and dining options to fit any occasion from fine dining at Fredrick’s Supper Club, to the family-friendly Milton Family Restaurant, to the laid back atmosphere of Junction Pub. Specialty retail shops like Red Rooster mix function with nostalgia as they sell unique furnishings and other items suitable for the home or as gifts. An emerging arts theme is a perfect fit for a district where you can have a classic car restored or a hand-made metal sculpture manufactured.

City and downtown leadership should maximize these assets by programing experiences that invite visitors to celebrate and interact with these businesses, particularly those with the most visibility. A showcase that displays a before & after of the classic cars restoration process or metalwork creations would attract the attention of passersby and draw them into the downtown. Icecream making classes at Junction shops may provide a fun summer activity for the family while introducing them to the business. Scheduling a Milton Restaurant week in collaboration with Goodrich Square will provide residents and newcomers alike with a fresh opportunity to explore the culinary experiences in their own backyard.

#### **Formally and consistently program and market events**

Several events have been hosted in both downtowns and received widespread praise. Concerts and “movies on the green” in Junction Square have provided fun for all ages and drawn participation from throughout the region. The community supports local activities. Establishing events that are consistently hosted in downtown Junction Square will increase downtown visitors, provide visibility for all businesses and create a lasting experience that will keep people coming back year after year. Well run events are a great tool for spreading word of mouth about a city or downtown. If consistently organized, this positive experience becomes synonymous with a visit to downtown Junction Square.

### **Market Junction Square amenities to campers and seasonal visitors**

The campers who are drawn to Lake Koshkonog each year are a transient, yet profitable market for businesses they frequent. However, with several services located on or near the camp site, Milton businesses often struggle to attract these summer residents. Leadership should consider direct marketing of Junction Square amenities like the laundromat, restaurants, and sports bars to campers. There is also an opportunity to communicate to campers that a trip to Milton’s Junction Square is just the type of excursion they vacation for. Businesses could offer “Campers Night” where campers enjoy certain specials, or provide casual entertainment that campers are sure to put on their itinerary. The City and downtown leadership should also be sure to provide campers with a “Your Guide to Milton” itinerary or brochure that highlights all the City and both downtowns have to offer as far as goods, services, and entertainment. For the campers, this offers a new experience, takes the headache out of research, and makes Milton the easiest option for a daytrip or excursion.

### **Promote and attract niche / specialty food retailers and diverse dining options in order to establish Junction Square as Milton’s arts and entertainment district**

Specialty shops, particularly for food goods are growing in popularity as people demand to know more about their food and its lifecycle. Consumers are putting their money where their mouth is and choosing the personalized touch of the local shop over the long lines and casual service of supermarket retailers. Milton is especially positioned to capitalize on this growing preference. Not only does the community enjoy a long and thriving agricultural industry, the City has a growing number of niche and specialty food retailers that are drawing the bulk of their revenues from outside the Milton trade area. In fact, of the \$9,188,977 in sales generated by these retailers, only 11% was generated from within the trade area (roughly defined by the Milton School District and the Town of Newville). Promoting these retailers and attracting will contribute to Milton’s growing reputation as a specialty foods destination.

People are not the only ones who benefit from access to specialty food retailers. Restaurants are increasingly looking for opportunities to offer “farm to table” options that add a sustainable and local flair to their menus. The City and downtown leadership should consider promoting Milton’s specialty food offerings and agricultural heritage to attract restaurants interested in serving the freshest ingredients and sustainable food. These restaurants are often a destination for foodies who are willing to travel and make a day trip to explore the food offerings of districts throughout the country. By attracting these travelers to diverse food options in Junction Square, the City will also be exposing them to the unique retailers and craftsmen that make this downtown unique.



### **Promote and attract artists and craftsmen to the Junction to create a vibrant arts destination for Milton-area artists and collectors**

Another destination-shaping force is the arts. Downtown Junction Square is currently home to a master metalworker and a classic car restorer. These uses not only draw visitors, but they generate buzz about the Junction and contribute greatly to the City's arts and culture vibe. The arts is increasingly viewed as a hallmark of thriving communities and with the district's history and charm, there are many artists who may find the Junction inspiring. Additionally, artists are turning towards small towns as a place where they can find affordable space and supportive, dependable clientele. The City should boost its existing arts and skilled craft resources, and attract additional artisans in order to create an attractive district that celebrates and promotes Milton's culture.

### **Increase outdoor dining opportunities**

## **STRATEGIC INITIATIVE 2: MAXIMIZE OPEN SPACE, PEDESTRIAN ACCESS, AND RECREATIONAL ASSETS**

Vibrant downtowns are bustling cauldrons of activity, and activity is created where people feel safe and invited to socialize and engage. Walkable districts with adaptable open spaces, interactive features, and recreational activities perfectly complement a thriving business climate. Not only do they provide a proximate retreat during a long day of shopping, but they attract people to the district for uses beyond shopping. This increases the potential customer base for businesses and creates activity downtown that thrives independent of a fully occupied business district. Maps 3 and 4 show a concept plan for maximizing the public space in Junction Square.

### **Create a pedestrian walk connection and respite through Junction Square**

Improve the pedestrian-friendliness of Junction Square by providing safe access points into the downtown for visitors crossing Madison Avenue or crossing at Vernal and Merchant Row to the south. These are frequently used access points for pedestrians who often feel unsafe at the crossing. Additionally, the City should consider constructing a formalized bike/pedestrian/snowmobile path that runs behind Front Street businesses along the spine of Junction Square. This path as highlighted in Map 3 in brown will reduce pedestrian, bicycle and snowmobile interaction with cars increasing safety and navigability of Junction Square for all users. Additionally, by providing visible, formalized amenities for alternative modes of transportation, people will be less dependent on their cars which will free up valuable parking spaces.

A trial user respite area is also shown in Map 3 just north of the parking lot. This area could be adapted for various functions depending on the season, event, or users. In the winter the respite would serve as parking for snowmobilers traveling the trail. During warmer weather, bike racks and horse hitching stations could be provided. Trail maps, seating, and shade would invite trail users to pause and relax in Junction Square where they then can be invited into downtown businesses.

### **Create one or more additional recreational amenities in Railroad Park and /or Liberty Park to attract users to on an on-going basis**

A common challenge for cities is activating public spaces consistently year-round use. Nevertheless, on-going activities is necessary to keeping public spaces viable and attractive. With the Junction's close proximity to the Ice Age Trail that runs along Vernal Ave, Snowmobile Trail which cuts through the downtown, and Little League diamond located in Liberty Park, there are several recreational activities that could be enriched to cultivate year-round park use.

During the cold-weather season, Railroad Park could be turned into a "Winter Wonderland" with lights dotting the trees, and other festive decorations that could enhance the park in celebration of the season. Ice and snow sculpting competitions could be hosted in Railroad Park, and the entries could remain on display for weeks creating a winter ice garden. The ball field in Liberty Park could be transformed into an ice skating rink that will draw residents and provide a destination excursion for snowmobilers traveling on the path. A temporary shelter could be constructed to sell users hot chocolate, hand warmers, and rent ice skates. A snowmobile sales, rental and repair shop could be located in Junction Square to service trail users.

In warmer seasons, the snowmobile shop could transition to bikes and service bicyclist, particularly long-distance Ice Age Trail users who may need mechanical work. In addition to users relaxing in the park, morning yoga classes, evening star gazing events, and library book fairs could draw people into the space. All this activity means more people in downtown Junction, more visibility for businesses, and more customers "discovering" what Junction has to offer.

### **Consider low impact adult sports in the downtown**

The Liberty Park is used for Little League games roughly four nights a week with no games Friday through Sunday. The City and downtown leadership should consider encouraging adult leagues who may want to use the space for low-impact sports like volleyball, whiffle ball, or kickball. These sports could use the small field for games. Teams could be sponsored by different restaurants and bars where teams could retire after matches. These games would if little if any impact on the Little League games as a Friday-Sunday schedule is more agreeable for working adults.

### **Improve Liberty Park facilities and consider other adaptable uses**

Liberty Park includes the large stretch of land with the water tower that sits behind west of the ballfield. There are restrooms and a small playground located here. The City should consider improving these facilities to increase their attractiveness and usage. Adaptable uses like an ice skating rink or free play zone should be considered for this safe, fenced field. Other facilities or functional enhancements as detailed in Map 3 may include a small cul-de-sac to facilitate drop-offs and pick-ups during games. A vehicle connector leading from the field to Vincent Street would help ease traffic flow and take pressure off the tight, neighborhood streets.

### **Highlight Ice Age Trail with visual elements**

The Ice Age Trail is a 1,000 mile trail located entirely within the state of Wisconsin. This national treasure takes users on a geographical tour of the glacial landscapes of the state. The trail has over 1.25 million users year round making it one of the premier recreational assets in the state and a tremendous generator of revenue for Wisconsin's tourism and recreation industries. This trail generates approximately \$113 million for local economies, and runs along the base of downtown Junction Square. Such a valuable asset should be celebrated, clearly marked, and advertised to residents.

Additionally, there is an opportunity to ensure that existing Junction Square businesses are accessing a portion of economic activity generated by this trail. The City and leaders should consider placing trail-oriented signage that guides trail users into downtown Junction before they follow the trail along Vernal Ave and out of the neighborhood. Uses that could service these trail users should be attracted to Junction. These could include a bike fix-it stations, a hiker out posts that provides shade and a water bottle refill station, even pamphlets that provide information about both downtowns and the City as a whole.

### **Activate Railroad Park with railroad themed elements**

Railroad Park should have a more discernible railroad theme that celebrates the rail activity that is Junction Square's namesake. One option is to bringing the City-owned locomotive located next to the ball field, into Railroad Park. This would not only provide an interesting show piece the park, but it could form the backdrop of a stage that could be used for small concerts, open mic events, or outdoor presentations (see graphic 1). When not being used by events, the stage could have simple seating that would allow visitors and hobbyists to get up close and personal with the technology that still drives commerce in region.

### **Realign ball park entrances/exits to encourage users to visit downtown establishments**

The Liberty Park ball field attracts large crowds to the area with some visitors laying out on blankets in Railroad Park to watch a game. However, there is no trail or discernible access point from the park into downtown Junction Square. As a result, many people enter the downtown neighborhood without stepping foot into the heart of the business district. This is a loss for the restaurants, bars, and retailers who could benefit from serving these users before, during, and after a game. By creating a formal path for users, more business will be created in the downtown. Teams will be more likely to unwind at a local restaurant. Parents may decide to shop while their child is warming up for a game. Adult sports teams may relax at their local water hole after a match. A path allows downtown Junction to benefit from activity that is already present.

## **STRATEGIC INITIATIVE 3: INTEGRATE A UNIFYING JUNCTION SQUARE THEME AND DEFINE GATEWAY ENTRIES**

Junction Square's narrow, neighborhood-oriented development adds to its cozy, boutique charm. However, it creates a challenge with navigation as its main north entrance on Madison Ave is nondescript and easily overlooked, and its southern half has even less visibility. Integrating a theme will

help market Junction Square as a unified district of unique retailers and restaurants and encourage visitors to explore the full experience

### **Create a unifying logo, color theme, and tag line that brands Junction Square**

A unifying logo, color scheme and tag line will brand downtown Junction Square. Through these elements, the City and downtown leadership will be able to control visual aspects of the district's character and communicate Junction Square's unique vibe and history to the public. Not only will this better help visitors trying to navigate to the district, but it will highlight businesses located in the district and communicate a more downtown feel. Businesses and residents may feel an increased sense of belonging and collaborate to ensure the district thrives as a unit. Additionally, when visitors consider a trip, they are more likely to choose Junction Square, viewing the district as a more robust shopping destination.

### **INTEGRATE STREETSCAPING AND THEME ELEMENTS ON MERCHANT ROW, VERNAL, FRONT ST. AND MADISON AVE. TO CREATE A COHESIVE DOWNTOWN CORE**

The City and leadership should consider clearly defining the downtown Junction Square boundary using streetscaping elements. Defining the boundary will concentrate business activity in the district and decrease spillage into the residential neighborhood. This will also encourage tenants who want the benefit of being visually aligned with Junction Square to locate in the vacant buildings on site. Streetscaping will add to the aesthetics of the district and communicate a positive image to shoppers.

### **ESTABLISH JUNCTION SQUARE GATEWAYS AT MADISON AVENUE AND VERNAL AVENUE BY ADDING COMPELLING VISUAL ELEMENTS AND LANDSCAPING**

Junction Square's main gateways are located along Madison and Vernal Avenue. These gateways serve as the "front door" to the community. They are at once tasked with grabbing the attention of passersby and communicating an attractive message about the many business within the district. For this reason, particular thought should be given to how these gateways are presented. Prominent entry pillar features and/or signage are some examples of potential options. Landscaping at these nodes should be maintained and some of the unifying visual elements should be discernable.

### **Add vehicular access from Merchant Row to Front Street**

A mid-block, two-way connector as graphically depicted in Fig. X would ease traffic flow and allow for access from Front Street, into the heart of the business district and vice versa. In addition to easing navigation, this access will increase mid-block visibility and access to businesses located in the southern portion of the site who previously were dependent on access from Madison Ave, or Vernal Ave.

### **Define surrounding neighborhood as a downtown neighborhood**

The surrounding neighborhood is a great asset for Junction Square. With people nearby 24/7, Junction businesses have a consistent customer base. There are also commercial businesses on First Lane which adds to the community-serving charm of Junction Square. Crandall Street dead ends on a vacant church site which may serve as a potential infill site. Overall, visually communicating this connection of Junction

Square with the surrounding neighborhood is another option for the community to consider. This may come in the form of street signs that bear the same color scheme or logo as those in the district proper. Other options may include similar lighting or streetscaping.

#### **Enhance property maintenance standards**

Maintaining a positive community image and reputation is greatly dependent on the maintenance of downtown properties. This is often a challenge for historic communities with aging architecture and expensive upkeep. However, setting design and maintenance standards for

#### **Create and maintain an available sites database**

When entrepreneurs or businesses are looking to locate in small communities, they often struggle to find a comprehensive list of available sites. The City and downtown leadership should create a comprehensive list of available properties located within both downtowns in order to best market and manage these sites.

### **STRATEGIC INITIATIVE 4: REUSE VACANT BUILDINGS AND PROPERTIES IN JUNCTION SQUARE**

Maintaining a vibrant downtown often hinges on the occupancy rate of storefronts. Reusing vacant buildings and properties will contribute to a more vibrant downtown whose various businesses attract resident and visitors alike.

#### **Work with owners of vacant buildings to identify and attract potential reuse or lease opportunities**

One of the key assets of the Junction Square is that many of the properties, both occupied and vacant, are owner by people living in or near the City of Milton. Sometimes these property owners struggle to attract and secure new tenants into their properties. The City should take advantage of this proximity and work closely with property owners to sell or lease their property to an active user.

#### **Consider additional housing development opportunities on infill sites**

Downtowns thrive when residents have easy access to the various retailers. Residents are able to live within walking distance to the downtown businesses, providing a 24/7 customer base. There are infill sites within the broader Junction Square neighborhood that could be redeveloped to provide additional, multi-family housing in the area. This housing could be townhomes or apartments that blend with the style of the other homes in the neighborhood so as not to disrupt the existing neighborhood character.

As the fire station and Cenex located prominently along Madison Avenue considers redevelopment, there is the potential to catalyzes these sites in a way that generates increased activity in the downtown

#### **Establish a regular farmer's market in vacant or open space**

Interest in a Wednesday evening farmer's market was a major takeaway from the community engagement process that informed this plan. Residents enjoyed the Saturday farmer's market that use to be located in the City, but felt that competition from other Saturday markets and events in the region detracted from its success. A Wednesday night market located in Railroad Park would create a draw that rallies the entire community at the Junction.

### **Assist prospective developers in accessing a financial resources**

There are several funding sources that can be used to assist developers in redeveloping a site. The most common source is Tax Increment Funding or TIF. TIF 7 currently encompasses the Junction Square neighborhood and has various properties eligible for redevelopment. The City should work to redevelop these sites in order to generate additional increment for downtown redevelopment. Business Improvement Districts are another options. Private property owners agree to a tax or levy to be collected from properties within the designated district. These funds can then be used on redevelopment projects, special events, security, maintenance, marketing and many other costs to be shared by the district.

### **Develop a museum or showroom that exhibits the work of artists and craftspeople**

#### **Create and maintain a database of available sites**

There is a lot of talent within Junction Square and the City of Milton as a whole. The City should consider constructing a museum or showcase space where the art and crafts of various artisans could be displayed. As shown in Map 3, there is an available lot just south of the Junction Square Quik Trip that could be used for this purpose. The site as drawn is roughly ~5,000sf of space and has great visibility from Madison Avenue.

### **Pursue grants for downtown redevelopment**

Grants are another common source for funds to support downtown redevelopment. The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, Economic Development Agency, US Department of Agriculture, and many other state and federal agencies often solicit application for projects that will generate economic development and support downtowns. These grant should be explored as the City pursues these various initiatives.

## **STRATEGIC INITIATIVE 5: ESTABLISH A FORMAL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND FUNDING MECHANISM FOR MANAGING JUNCTION SQUARE**

Milton is a unique community with two downtowns. To ensure that both downtowns are thriving together, it is important to define a formal organizational structure through which decisions can be made and roles communicated. Providing a stable funding source for this structure will be key to ensuring its success.

### **Establish joint marketing efforts, common store hours, and events etc.**

One of the frequent concerns of downtown visitors is that a lack of coordination will result in many stores or restaurants being closed during their visit. Often, a lack of consistency in marketing, store hours and downtown events makes the visit a hassle instead of an excursion. The downtown businesses and stakeholders should consider establishing common times and marketing collateral that presents the public with a unified Junction Square that is open for business. As events can be expensive and cost prohibitive for one property owner to attempt on their own, it is important for downtown businesses to collaborate on initiatives that draw attention to the district as a whole. This will increase the ability of Junction Square to present the events annually and strengthen the reputation of the Junction as the City's entertainment destination.

### **Clearly define roles and responsibilities between City and other downtown organizations**

The City, Chamber of Commerce, DDAC, and Economic Development Commission are all engaged in supporting Milton's two downtowns. With DDAC joining the Chamber, there has been some consolidation of efforts. Moving forward, these entities should consider clearly defining their roles and responsibilities in the promotion of Milton's business districts.

### **Consider hiring an events coordinator to manage events in both downtowns Identify a dedicated funding source**

TIF and BIDs are potential funding sources that could be used to hire a downtown events manager and implement many of the other initiatives recommended for Junction Square. The City, in conjunction with the downtown organizational structure should work together to maximize use of TIF 7 and explore additional funding streams.

### **Focus on assisting entrepreneurs with starting new restaurant, entertainment, and Arts/culture businesses in the downtown**

One way to encourage new businesses to locate in the area is by assisting local entrepreneurs in starting their own business. Often these small businesses require assistance maneuvering the business development process, but have a viable idea ready for a storefront. The downtown organizational structure would provide a clear mechanism through which entrepreneurs could receive assistance and have their questions answered. These businesses could be encouraged to occupy the vacant buildings located in Junction Row's southern boundary.

### **Look for opportunities to jointly market businesses and events at both downtowns**

Collaboration between Milton's two downtowns is a priority for the City and is key to enhancing business growth and development in either downtown. For this reason, the City in partnership with the downtown organizational structure should identify and pursue opportunities to jointly market businesses and events at both downtowns. One example of this might be advertising Junction Square restaurants and shops to Milton House visitors. Another cross marketing opportunity may be providing Ice Age Trail users with maps that highlight on and off street routes to Goodrich Square.

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# Junction Square

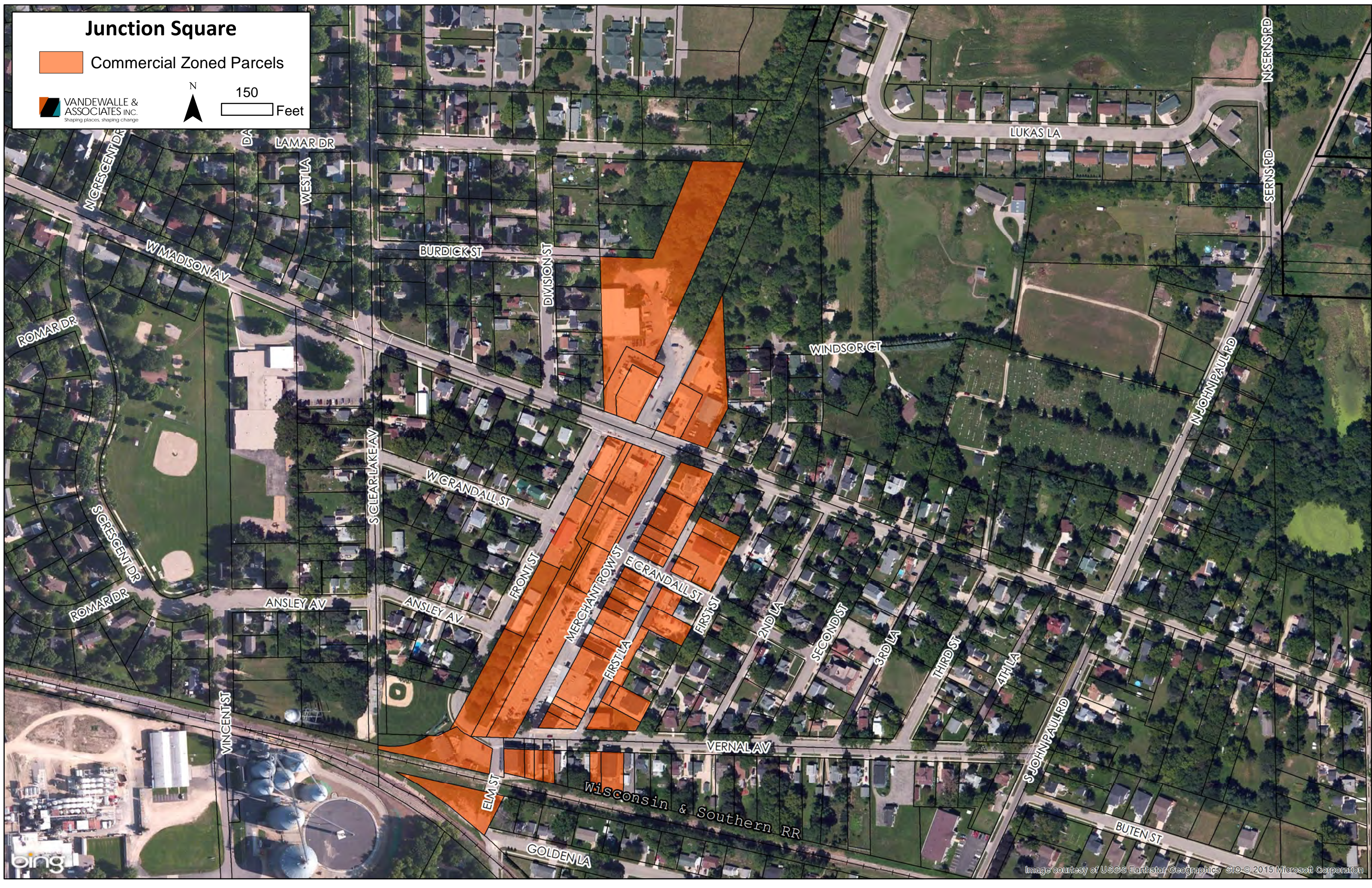
Commercial Zoned Parcels

VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES INC.  
Shaping places, shaping change



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# Junction Square

-  Junction Square Area Boundary
-  City Owned Parcels in Junction Square
-  Other Parcels in Junction Square

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Shaping places, shaping change



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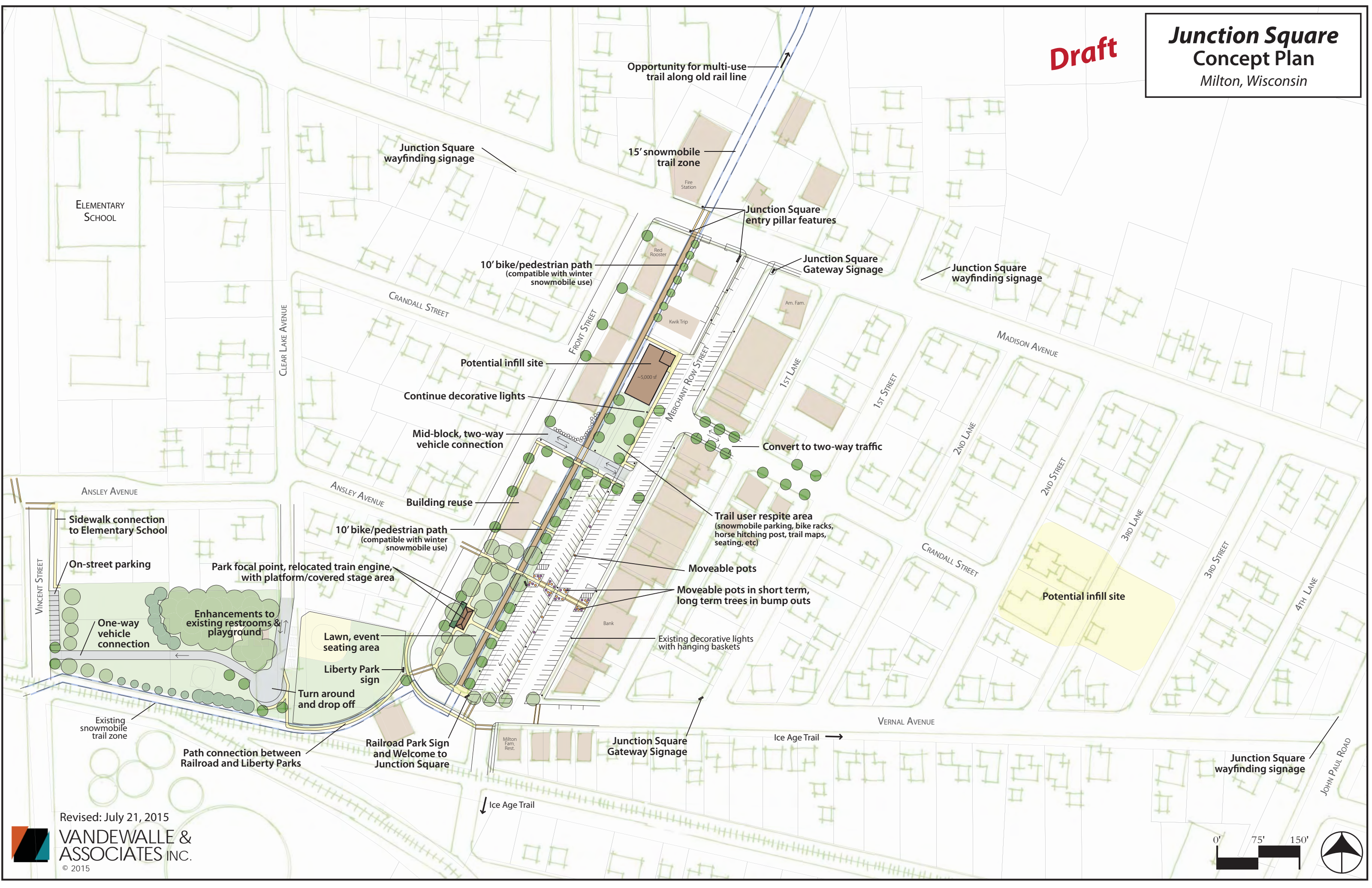
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**Draft**

# Junction Square Concept Plan

Milton, Wisconsin





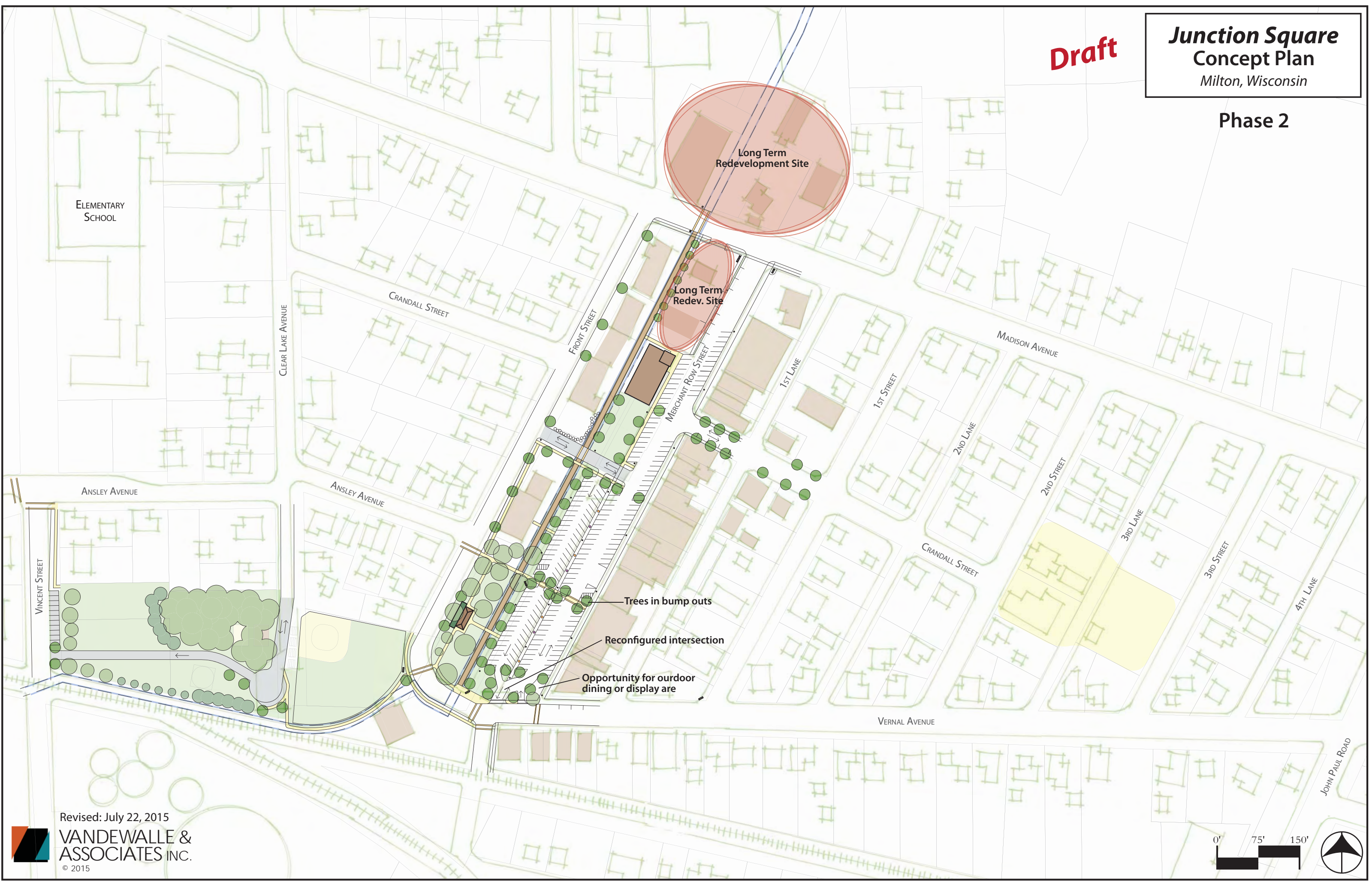
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**Draft**

**Junction Square  
Concept Plan**  
Milton, Wisconsin

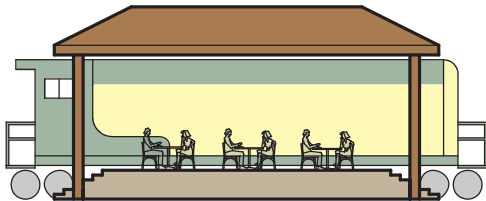
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# Junction Square

 Junction Square Area Boundary

 TID 7 Boundary

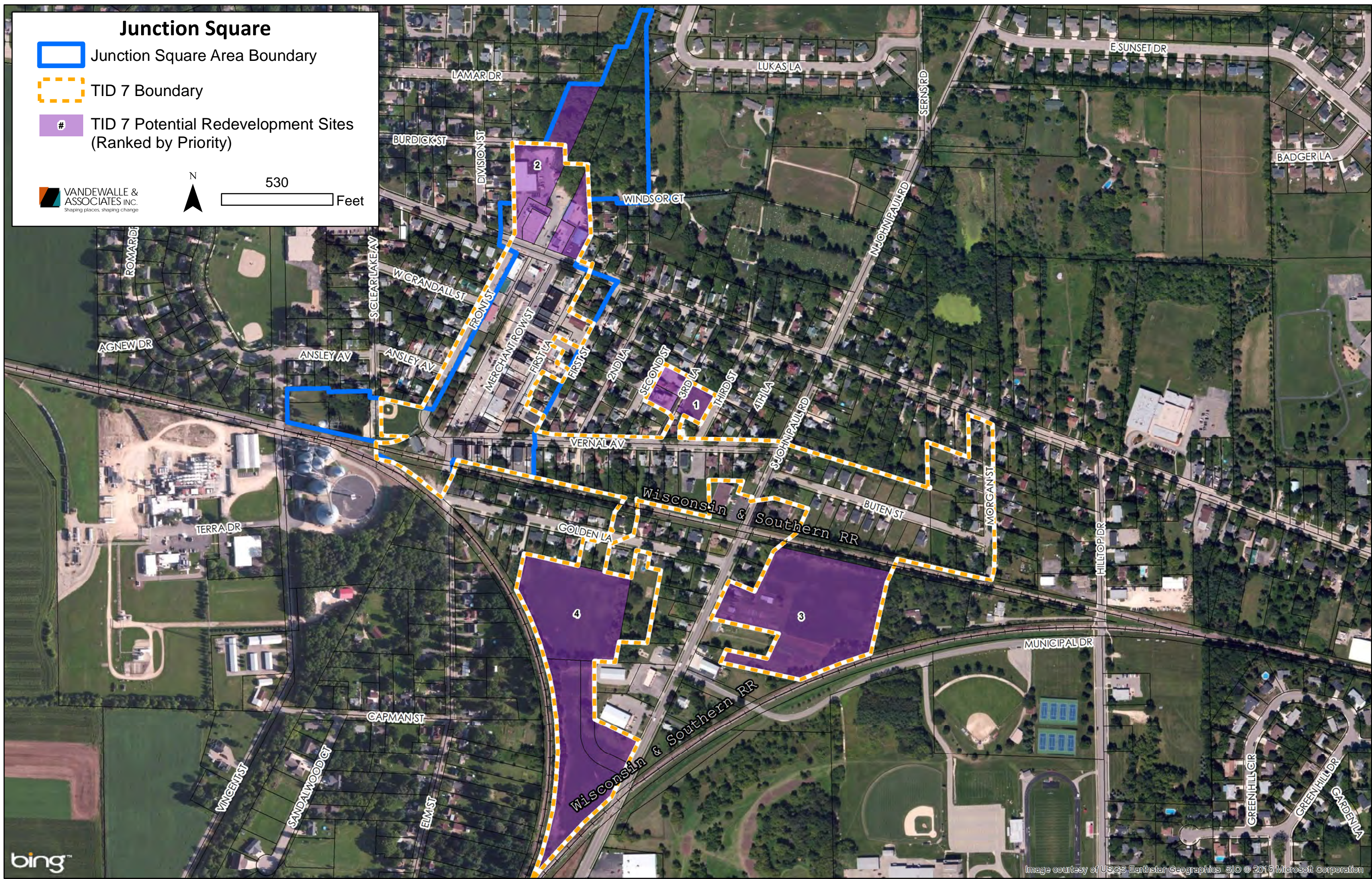
 # TID 7 Potential Redevelopment Sites (Ranked by Priority)

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## Part V: Implementation Strategy

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PROJECT COST ESTIMATES — FORTHCOMING

PRIORITIZED ACTION STEPS — TO BE PRIORITIZED BY PLAN COMMISSION ON JULY 29<sup>TH</sup> MEETING

### POTENTIAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Downtown Opportunity Analysis & Vision includes a wide range of potential projects and strategies to revitalize the downtown district. Many of these ideas will require a funding strategy and a long term commitment by the City and its partners. Several of the recommended projects are well-aligned for grant opportunities.

The following is a list of potential grant or funding sources that Milton should consider pursuing to implement the strategies, recommendations, and catalytic projects identified in the Plan. Additional research into these opportunities, meetings with representatives from these agencies, and further thought and refinement of the ideas in the Plan will be needed to pursue any of these opportunities.

**Economic Development Administration**—The EDA is committed to increasing the competitiveness and innovative spirit in American communities. There are several funding opportunities allocated each fiscal year. These programs target economic development or provide technical assistance to cities investing in their infrastructure. EDA’s investment priorities are projects that foster or improve:

- Collaborative Regional Innovation
- Public/Private Partnerships
- National Strategic Priorities
- Global Competitiveness
- Environmentally-Sustainable Development
- Economically distressed and Underserved communities

**USDA Rural Development**-- The United States Department of Agriculture’s Rural Development division provides funding for community and economic development initiatives in rural areas. Milton may be eligible for Rural Development funds that could support targeted efforts to strengthen businesses or provide needed infrastructure in the Downtown. The City should contact the USDA Rural Development “Area Director” to discuss possible opportunities to utilize Rural Development Funding.

**US Environmental Protection Agency**—The US EPA is dedicated to protecting human health and the environment. The EPA has a competitive brownfields program that provides grants and other funding for brownfield site assessment and cleanup. They also provide trainings and educational

resources to communities impacted by brownfield sites. A brownfield is property which may be contaminated by hazardous substances, pollutants or other contaminants. Former industrial sites that are ideal for redevelopment or reuse but are suspected of contamination may be eligible for EPA brownfield funding.

**Federal Tax Credits**—Tax credits are a dollar-for-dollar decrease in ones tax liability and the percent depends on the amount of funding allocated that year and the project type. For example, Historic preservation tax credits are offered at 20% or 10% by the National Park Service. The 20% income tax credit is used to rehabilitate structures that are income producing and certified as historic by the National Park Service. By contrast, the 10% tax credit is offered to non-historic buildings that were in service prior to 1936. These tax credits have proven to be highly effective in encouraging development of older dilapidated sites that hold historic or architectural significance for the community.

**Dept. of Natural Resources**—The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources supports state agriculture, tourism, mining and many other activities that contribute to economic development throughout the state. Additionally DNR maintains state owned parks, forests, trail and recreational sites. The DNR provides funding to cities and other entities who wish to enhance natural areas and recreational sites.

**TIF leveraging**—Tax Increment Financing is a tool commonly used by municipalities to generate capital for projects within the TIF boundary. By earmarking revenue generated in excess of the original assessed value of the property. TIF funded projects range in scope but may include road repairs, property acquisition or new development. Much like tax credits, TIF funds can also be leveraged to attain additional funding from partners or attract developers to a project.

**Business Improvement Districts**—A BID is a defined area where an additional tax is collected to fund streetscaping, infrastructure improvements, events and other efforts to promote the district. BIDs may also provide services like street cleaning and security. BIDs are created and administered by the local property owners.

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# Appendix I: Summary of Charrette Input

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Twenty forms were collected from Charrette participants

## Comprehensive Plan Feedback

### Asset Prioritization Results

1. Strong education system & Residents who care deeply about their community
2. Low crime community & High-quality city services
3. Small town character with modern conveniences & Crossroads Business Park
4. Goodrich Square and Junction Square
5. Easy access to Highway 26 and the Interstate
6. Quality park facilities
7. Well-connected to larger cities & Convenient navigation within the city
8. Historic buildings and homes with character & Lake Koshkonong and several large campgrounds & Ice Age Trail connection

### Written in Assets

- Bike route to \_\_
- Recreation Opportunities
- Recreational facilities expansion

### Questions

1. If you could change one thing about the city, what would it be?
  - Larger roundabout
  - Enforce crosswalk/Pedestrian respect
  - More unique shops
  - More innovation, more arts & cultural offerings, more community festivals
  - Public transportation available
  - Event coordinator
  - Increase communication and sharing between city and MREC
  - Improve Building facades
  - More progressive attitude
  - Get all invested in a shared vision
  - Add more venues to bring people to town i.e. soccer fields, basketball, volleyball gyms
  - More school traffic off Madison Ave. with another road connecting 59 to 26
2. In 1-3 words, how would you describe Milton today?

|                             |             |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| • Relaxation                | • Boring    |
| • Recovering community      | • Happy     |
| • Evolving community        | • Simple    |
| • Strong community identity | • Unaware   |
| • Friendly                  | • Cautious  |
| • Unengaged                 | • Community |



- Friendly
- Slow-changing
- Small Town Friendliness
- Small town character
- Cohesive community
- Growing

- Great Community
- Great potential
- Place to live
- Comfortable
- My home

3. In 1-3 words, how would you describe the Milton you'd like to see in the future?

- Relevant
- Friendly
- Destination
- Organized growth
- Growth
- Vision
- Viable
- Vibrant (2)
- Welcoming
- Affordable
- Diverse
- Premier community in Rock County
- Continued growth in bringing people to town to spend money
- Lively and Engaged
- More Entertainment
- Innovative
- Lively
- Attractive
- Still friendly and convenient
- Proud of its assets
- Happy
- Re-invested
- Thriving

# Public Space Workspace

## Priority Ranking Responses

1. Trail Connections
2. Railroad Park
3. Liberty Park

## Questions

1. How do you use the park space in Junction Square now?
  - Snowmobile trails
  - Watch friends kids play baseball
  - Don't use at all (5)
  - Scenery
  - Food & Drink (2)
  - 
  - I don't believe the community uses it much at all
  - Not. There is not a nice place to sit
  - I park in front of it daily, however, rarely use the park
2. What type of park activities do you think would draw more people to Junction Square?
  - Volleyball
  - Adult activities
  - Concerts (6)
  - Farmers Market (4)
  - Casual Concerts
  - Any bike activity
  - Music (2)
  - Fairs
  - Festivals
  - Craft Fair
  - Art Shows
  - Junction Function –Each Month in Summer
  - Dining (taste of event)
  - Art
  - Rail History
  - People will not play volleyball without alcohol or MREC
  - Destination
  - Offering more activities for all age groups
  - Community engagement
  - Different activities or opportunities
  - Plays/Theatre
  - Events
  - Gatherings

## **Written-In “Other” Priorities**

- Liberty park was just redone
- Shops
- Professional offices
- Madison Ave. entrance
- Vernal Ave entrance
- Nicer signing

## Junction Square Work Group

### Ranking of Issues

1. Improve pedestrian connections
2. Create visual and functional unifying elements
3. Ensure land uses and aesthetic of Madison Ave, Front St, and Vernal St are reflective of Junction Square character
4. Create a true gateway to Junction Square
5. Diversify drinking and dining establishments available to Junction Square visitors and residents
6. Adjust traffic pattern to increase traffic flow to southern portion of downtown & Activate open spaces and recreational assets
7. Define responsibilities between the City, various groups, and business owners
8. Increase the number of people living downtown

### Write in "Other" Responses

- Improve building facades
- Visual Standards
- City Marketing

### Questions

1. Are there other issues not covered in the matrix above that you would like to see addressed?
  - Importance of open space activities –coordination
  - Pedestrian traffic near Milton Family Restaurant
  - Add picnic tables
  - Work out the parking behind Kwik Trip
  - Very specialized shelter to have bike racks included we need more
  - promotion of Ice age and bike trails with events.
  - The parking is ugly and needs greenery/some art like murals
  - Professional employment opportunities downtown will assist in developing these areas
2. What other potential businesses or services would you like to see in Junction Square?
  - Deli (2)
  - Coffee shop
  - Services are good. Its gathering that we need
  - Professional services
  - Picnic tables for Kwik Trip coffee-Lunch venues/specials
  - More free classes in the park during the day for all ages
  - Professional offices (2)
  - New development
  - Bike shop
  - Specialty shop –unique experience
  - Noted on chart
  - Farmer's Market
  - Tours of the Masonic Temple
3. Please share any additional thoughts you have about this project and Junction Square below:

- Like the charrettes
- Signature entryway
- Pleasing entrance at both ends (bump outs) encourage Kwik Trip to rearrange store layout on lot
- Relocate/Reconfigure Kwik Trip
- Don't forget about the other side of town -> Coordinate/ consolidate 2 plans into one ☺
- People -> tourist like things to take photos with
- Train education
- Station leading stations
- Selfie stations

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## Appendix II: Summary of Open House Input

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Pending

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